

odd peculiarity gave it almost such an advantage as that of a proper name among the lumber of common words by which they were described and reviled; while yet it meant anything, everything, which the vain world disliked in the devout and conscientious character. To the more sluggish it saved, and to the more loquacious it relieved, the labour of endlessly repeating- "demure rogues," "sanctimonious pretenders," "formal hypocrites."*

The abusive faculty of this word has long been extinct, and left it to become a grave and almost venerable term in history ; but some word of a similar cast was indispensably necessary to the vulgar of both kinds. The vain and malignant spirit which had decried the elevated piety of the Puritans, sought about (as Milton describes the wicked one in Paradise) for some convenient form in which it might again come forth to hiss at zealous Christianity ; and in another lucky moment fell on the term *Methodist*. If there is no *sense* in the word, as now applied, there seems however to be a great deal of aptitude and execution. It has the advantage of being comprehensive as a general denomination, and yet opprobrious as a special badge, for everything that ignorance and folly may mistake for fanaticism, or that malice may wilfully assign to it. Whenever a formalist feels it his duty to sneer at those operations of religion on the passions, by which he has never been disturbed, he has only to call them *mcthodistical*; and though the word be both so trite and so vague, he feels as if he had uttered a "good pungent thing. There is a satiric smartness in the word, though there be none in the man. In default of keen faculty in the mind, it is delightful thus to find something that will do as well, ready bottled up in odd terms. It is not less convenient to a profligate, or a coxcomb, whose propriety of character is to be p-upported by laughing indiscriminately at religion in every form; the one, to evince that his courage is not sapped by conscience, the other, to make the best advantage of his instinct of catching at impiety as a compensative substitute for sense. The word *Methodism* so readily sets aside all religion as superstitious folly that they pronounce it with an air as if no more 'needed to be said. Such terms have a pleasant facility of throwing away the matter in question to scorn, without any trouble of making a definite intelligible